

Inside View

J^{im}
T^{ime}

Now About Daddy

As I shared last month, my mother has always been “Mother” not Mom. Ironically, my daddy was always Daddy, never Dad. One parent had the more formal name, the other much more informal. I don’t read anything into it—it is just the way it has always been.

Daddy grew up in the Depression. He was born in 1921. His father died suddenly in the back yard of his house from internal bleeding in 1927. I don’t know what caused it, all I know is Daddy was six years old with no father. Daddy’s mother died of breast cancer when he was 16.



Robert A. Thomason

We all know what happened to America in 1941, so Daddy found himself in the South Pacific in the “Army Air Corps” the predecessor to the Air Force. He returned after the war and was a pharmaceutical salesman. He and my mother fell in love and married in June of 1948, and from that wonderful marriage five children were born.

Daddy was an energetic and curious reader. He never attended college. He learned how to “detail” drugs with Abbott Labs by reading the Physician Desk Reference (PDR) at night. He consumed writers like C.S. Lewis, Dietrich Bonhoeffer and studied the Bible as carefully as any lay person. His interest and curiosity in theology and life was inspiring to me.

I have always admired Daddy for his outstanding and natural skills as a salesman, a nurturing father, a Churchman, and according to my mother, until the last couple of years, she had a wonderful husband and viewed him as a wonderful father to his children.



Jim Thomason

President and CEO

The Resident Association is Your Association!

The purpose of the Resident Association of Westminster Towers is to enhance the quality of resident life; to provide an amicable means of communication between residents and administration with respect to policies and their implementation, and to foster other matters of common interest to the membership.

The following members of the Executive Committee will be installed at the June 7 meeting: President, **Frank Kiser**; Vice President, **David Henriquez**; Secretary, **Pat Bramer** and Treasurer, **Buzz Benson**.

During the June 7 meeting you will hear from the following Committee Chairs:

Dorothy Kerr, chair of the Life Enrichment/Activities Committee. This Committee helps to plan trips, parties, games, arts and crafts and special functions.

Lorraine Hernandez, is the chair of the Correspondence Committee. This Committee acknowledges birthdays and offers solace to ill residents with notes and cards.

Lynn Hornsby chairs the Food Service Committee. This Committee works with Dining Services to enhance the quality and service of the food in the dining room and Corner Café.

Patrice Hinnant, Life Enrichment Director, chairs the Health and Wellness Committee. This Committee is dedicated to promoting health and wellness on the campus.

Peggy Collins is the chair of the Library Committee which is responsible for keeping the Towers' Library organized and stocked with current reading material.

Ed Harding is the chair of the Maintenance and Service committee. This committee works closely with Plant Operations regarding safety and maintenance needs and informs residents of services and projects around the campus.

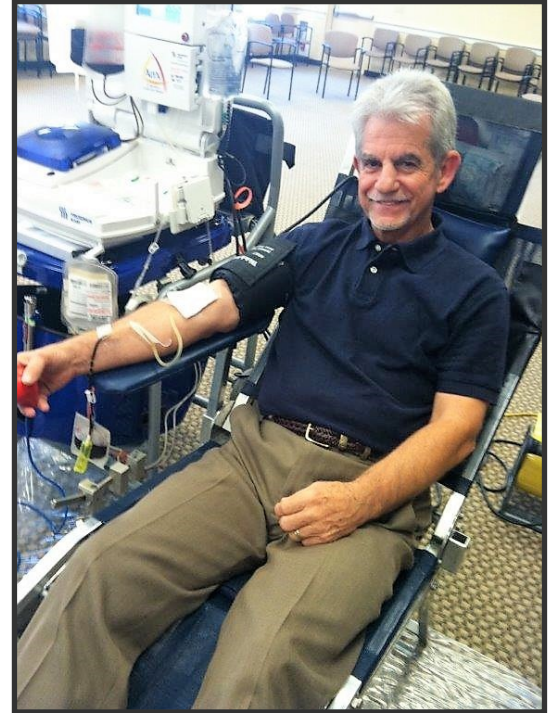
Ed FitzGerald is chairing the **Newsletter Committee** which publishes the *Westminster Windows*, a monthly newsletter.

Joanne Cauthen chairs the Welcome Committee which is responsible for reaching out to new residents, to assist with their transition to their new life at The Towers.



Just two short months ago, these raised garden beds were barren, but with effort from our Towers gardeners and the help of our Master Gardener, the flowers and vegetables are thriving!

If you live at the Towers, there is never a shortage of things to do, people to see or places to visit!



One of our faithful Towers volunteers, Don Gillespie, donated his blood to the Community Blood Bank Drive in May.



Vernon Sumwalt and Gloria Cody enjoying a cool drink at the Riverwalk Pump House.



Anna Banks, Gene and Imogene Blackmon, Don Hunt cast their vote at the May 2 Congressional primary.



Spencer Anderson relaxing at the Barnes' Lake house after a special lunch.

I Love You Dad

The pale green walls, tile floor, venetian blinds in curtainless windows, and oxygen/intravenous tubes created all the sterility expected of a hospital room. Yet, the intensity of my own emotions made the room vibrant with life.

Every Father's Day, as well as other days, my memory relives what happened there.

I stood beside my Dad's bed, holding his hand. His face and body were unable to conceal the effects of four heart attacks in ten years. I wondered if this would be the last such scene though similar ones had preceded. The experience of living without your dad, which all expect but none are ready for, seemed imminent for me.

My emotions were mixed. There was deep sadness as I imagined what it would be like without his big smile, cheerful voice, and gentle manner. Flashes of anxiety accompanied the awareness he may no longer be there when I so desperately needed his fatherly love, help and encouragement.

Gratitude flooded my heart also. Thankful that our relationship was such a loving one. Our greeting never consisted of just a handshake, but a warm embrace and kiss on the cheek whether in private or public. When he disciplined me—as any good father should—he made sure I never doubted that he loved me. He gave my meager achievements the status of greatness, and he made certain I knew he was proud I was his son regardless of my failures.

Now, alone with my dad in his hospital room, I listened to every labored breath wondering if there would be another. Suddenly, I realized I could not remember when I had told him I loved him. A sense of urgency overwhelmed me. If it was going to be, maybe it needed to be now.

I gently rubbed his hand. He opened his eyes, which displayed his pain, and looked into my face. "Dad," I said softly, "I want you to know how very much I love you."

"I know you do, son, and I love you too," his weak but clear voice responded.

I leaned over, pressed my face to his, and kissed him on the cheek. He closed his eyes.

Soon, his breathing seemed less strained. Apparently his pain had subsided some and he appeared more comfortable. Perhaps he could get some sleep that had so evaded him.

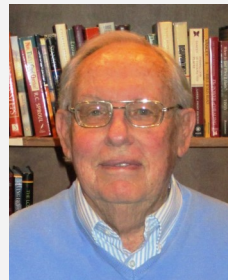
Fifty miles away the congregation I pastored was gathering for Sunday morning worship. I quietly slipped from the room and walked down the corridor to a telephone to give them a report on my dad and request their continued prayers.

As I walked back to his room, there was a warm feeling in my heart about having told Dad how much I loved him. After all, what if I never had another opportunity.

I didn't! As I approached his door, a nurse came out. She put her arm around me as I heard her say, "Your dad just died peacefully in his sleep."

Having said, "I love you Dad," in the last moments we shared is one of the treasured moments of my life. I only wish I had said it more often through the years.

~French O'Shields



Rev. Dr. French O'Shields, a retired pastor and published author, wrote a weekly syndicated column for 20 newspapers in N.C., S.C., Ga. and Fla.



Meet Your Neighbor



Janet Billey, Apt. 220

Janet Billey moved from Buffalo, New York, into Apartment #220 last March. Like many residents, her move here was encouraged by her daughter, **Denise** who lives in Fort Mill. **Janet** was born in Albany, New York, worked for the State and married **Gerald**, a former Marine in 1947. Yes, they also met on a blind date and she accepted because he had a car! Their marriage took them to Syracuse and eventually Buffalo, where **Gerry** worked for Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation. After 31 years of marriage and three children, **Gerry** passed away. **Janet** met her second husband, **John**, at a dance and they were married for 35 years until his recent death.

For many years **Janet** worked as a tax accountant at the Carborundum Plant in Niagara Falls. When asked about the famous Buffalo Blizzard of 1977, she relates this wonderful story: "It was a Friday and the weather reports were calling for blizzard conditions. The office was closed at noon and I headed for home. Snow was falling and the winds were creating massive drift conditions. Just short of the bridge to Grand Island all traffic came to a stop. A young man came by my stranded car and said that he would take me to safe shelter. I spent that Friday night in a small cottage with others who had abandoned their cars. There was no food in the cottage. Early Saturday morning snow mobiles arrived and took us to better accommodations. Fortunately the family that sheltered me was a gregarious Italian family that served the most delicious pasta to us starving refugees. We stayed with this family until the following Monday when a snow mobile took me to my home. There were many who perished from exposure during the blizzard—what an experience!"

Janet arrived at Westminster Towers without ever seeing her apartment. She loves living in our community and enjoys bingo, movie nights and plans on joining more of the outside adventures. Ask her more about the blizzard. It's a great story and she tells it well!

~ Ed FitzGerald

CARF is Coming!

In an effort to promote quality and value of services for our residents, Westminster Towers undergoes a rigorous

accreditation process with the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities International (CARF) as a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC). The Towers was the first such campus in the State of South Carolina to have earned this prestigious recognition in 1997. This summer, **Jennifer Oliver**, a non-traditional Winthrop student is doing her internship with The Towers and will be assisting staff as they prepare for an on-campus survey by a team of experts in CCRC's. This fall the CARF team will examine Towers' programs, services and business practices and provide a written report of our strengths and areas that we can improve in order for us to continue to lead in senior services in South Carolina.



Don Hunt

President of the
Resident Association

Hopefully the articles I have submitted to the Windows over the last two years have brought you a smile, a brighter day, a change in thought, a deeper appreciation of family and friends, a realization we are not alone—others do matter and care—and enjoy the “gift and blessings” of each day and be thankful we can be an encourager and help to someone.

Once all villagers decided to pray for rain, on the day of prayer all the people gathered, but only one boy came with an umbrella.

That's FAITH

When you throw babies in the air, they laugh because they know you will catch them.

That's TRUST

Every night we go to bed without any assurance of being alive the next morning, but we still set the alarms to wake up.

That's HOPE

We plan big things for tomorrow in spite of zero knowledge of the future.

That's CONFIDENCE

We see the world suffering, but we still get married and have children.

That's LOVE

On an old man's shirt was written a sentence, “I am not 80 years old: I am sweet 16 with 64 years of experience.”

That's ATTITUDE

Have a happy day and live your life with FAITH, TRUST, HOPE, CONFIDENCE, LOVE and ATTITUDE.

“Good friends are the rare jewels of life...difficult to find and impossible to replace.”

WESTMINSTER TOWERS RESIDENT'S BILL OF RIGHTS

As a resident of Westminster Towers Independent Living campus, you have, or your legal guardian has, the right to:

- ⇒ Choose your own personal physician;
- ⇒ Have security in storing your personal possessions;
- ⇒ Be treated with respect and dignity;
- ⇒ Be free from mental or physical abuse;
- ⇒ Be free from working or performing services for the facility;
- ⇒ Have your legal guardian, family members, and other relatives see you when they visit;
- ⇒ Send and receive mail with freedom and privacy;
- ⇒ Associate and communicate privately with persons of your choice;
- ⇒ Meet with and participate in social, religious, and community group activities.

Reminder!
Resident Association
Meeting
June 7, 2017
2:30 p.m.
Heritage Hall

Contributions



Capital Campaign

John and June Eason

Endowment Fund

In honor of **Eleanor Patton**
Charles Patton

In memory of **Florence Dickey**

June Blind
Ann Polk Bomar
Joanne Cauthen
Larry and Susie Doggett
Brenda Greene
Jim and Kack Hardin
Sig and Judy Huitt
Carey and Lillian Tate

In memory of **Evelyn French**
Mary Ellen French Nogami
and Family
Mary French

In memory of **Bill Kirkpatrick**
Jean Barnes
Jeannette (Pix) Drennan

In memory of **Mitt Sadler**
Dent Graham

In memory of **Sudie Wilson**
Sig and Judy Huitt

Employees Assisting Employees

In memory of **Cindy Ashworth's father, Sam Collins**
Margaret Harbin

In memory of **Jean McPoland**
Ed McPoland

General Fund

Anonymous
Lee Smoak

Share the Spirit

Mike and Kay Harris
Glenn and Ellen Harris
Scott and Charlotte Harris

*Any gift to the
Endowment, Capital
Campaign or
Employee Assistance
Fund can be made in
honor or in memory
of a loved one or
neighbor.*

In Memory

Florence Dickey
Gailya Dow
Bill Kirkpatrick
Sudie Wilson

From the Garden

Please stop by the new gardens for a visit. Five of the six new beds have flowers, herbs and vegetables in various stages of growth. The bench has been relocated for a better view of this peaceful place. One bed remains unused. There is still ample time for planting. If you are interested call Patrice Hinnant @ 5077.



A life without
love is like a
year without
spring.



Jim, Daddy, Mother, Leeta, Janice, Dale and Mike — Easter 1960

...Daddy continued from Page 1

In the middle 1960's

Daddy encountered some struggles in his life that caused his work and family life to collapse. At his funeral service in 1995 my mother shared with all her children and grandchildren that we should be proud of our father and grandfather — that he was a fine husband, father, salesman, and Christian.

I struggled off and on with Daddy's struggles in life. But, as the years have piled on and as I have lived and gotten older, I have shifted my thinking and feelings from "not understanding" to profound "empathy." I've come to understand that almost all of us do the best we can in life, even when our best

doesn't always measure up to society's "best." My love and appreciation for Daddy grows every year as I get older. What was once a lack of understanding has moved to understanding.

With Mother's Day in May and Father's Day in June, I count myself blessed to have a mother who raised five children and to have a daddy who urged me to read, reflect, to think for myself. In him I saw how life can throw us challenges and obstacles.

He was a good man and I am proud of him.

~ Jim Thomason

SAVE THE DATE!

**June 17 — Music Festival and Anniversary Celebration
Heritage Hall and Manor Courtyard**

Westminster Towers, an extension of the ministry of Westminster Presbyterian Church, was founded on the theological principles and values of the Presbyterian Church in America. Our mission is to provide services that inspire, encourage, and empower seniors, while demonstrating the love of Christ to support individual well-being.



Westminster Windows is published monthly for the residents, staff and friends of Westminster Towers continuing care retirement community.

Submissions and column ideas are welcomed in writing to the following members of the newsletter committee (submissions will not be returned, and they will be used according to space availability and content appropriateness).

Editor: **Bette Christensen**; Newsletter Committee — Chair: Members: **Vernon Sumwalt, Pinky Funderburk, Beverly Henriquez, Gaylon Syrett**; Residents' Association President: **Don Hunt**; President and CEO: **Jim Thomason**; Director of Life Enrichment: **Patrice Hinnant**